

Young People's Scrutiny Forum

Catching the bus

Terms of Reference

Introduction

Following on from the success of the Young People's Scrutiny Forum inquiry into Fairtrade in Leeds schools in 2005/06, Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) approached the Youth Council to suggest a topic for scrutiny in 2006/07.

The Youth Council decided upon transport for its inquiry which is in line with its manifesto priority to 'increase the number of young people using public transport across the city'. A Young People's Scrutiny Forum has therefore been commissioned by Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) to carry out an inquiry into transport on behalf of the board.

In order to widen representation it was decided to invite young people from ROAR (Reach Out and Reconnect) to join the forum. As a result the Young People's Scrutiny Forum consists: solely of young people who have volunteered; with a good balance between members from the Youth Council and from ROAR; and with a mix of age groups.

At the first meeting of the forum in September 2006, the forum decided to focus its inquiry on the city's bus services (excluding school buses).

The forum will operate under the same rules and procedures as any other scrutiny board, combined with good practice with regard to youth work and youth participation. An officer from the Scrutiny Support Unit will provide the Young People's Scrutiny Forum with support and professional advice; professional youth workers from the Youth Council and ROAR will provide the youth work expertise; and officers from the Development Department, Leeds City Council and Metro will provide the transport expertise.

Although the council is not responsible for providing bus services in the city, it is hoped that the forum will be able to work in partnership with service providers and others to produce a positive outcome.

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) will project manage the inquiry, agree the terms of reference and receive and consider any recommendations in the final report.

Aims of the inquiry

1. To find ways of increasing the number of young people catching the bus across the city by identifying the barriers they encounter, and working in partnership with service providers and others to identify solutions.
2. To ensure the voices of young people in Leeds are heard with regard to transport issues.

The themes

The scrutiny forum has identified the following themes:

NB The first five of these themes are presented in order of priority as determined by the forum.

- The cost of travel
- The routes, reliability and frequency of bus services
- Feeling unsafe
- The relationship between bus drivers and young people
- The cleanliness and condition of buses, including graffiti
- The extent to which young people's views are taken account of during transport decision making

Methodology

The inquiry will be conducted using a combination of scrutiny and youth work practice including:

- The submission of written reports
- The exploration of issues through discussions and games
- Consultation with young people by young people
- A delegate event or forum meeting where young people and decisions makers can discuss the emerging issues

Outline timetable for the inquiry

5th September 2006

To cover:

- Introductions
- Setting the scene
- Putting together the terms of reference

5th October 2006

To cover:

- Finishing the terms of reference
- Thinking through the themes
- On what, and how, should the forum consult young people/others?
- Background information

24th October 2006

Plan any consultation events / activities

November

Consultation events / activities

January

To consider information with regard to:

- The cost of travel:
 - Concessionary fare schemes operating in Leeds
 - The processes in place for young people to get concessionary passes
 - The pricing structures used by bus companies in Leeds
 - Concessionary systems and pricing structures in other areas of the country
 - The provision of information to young people
- The routes, reliability and frequency of bus services:
 - Where young people find it difficult to get to on the bus
 - Strategies for travel within and across the city centre (eg the free city bus)
 - The changing patterns of provision with regard to services to young people (eg Youth Matters, Extended Schools)
 - Current initiatives to improve the routes, reliability and frequency of bus services

February

To consider information with regard to:

- Feeling unsafe:
 - Strategies and policies currently employed to reduce crime and the fear of crime on buses
 - Any partnership working in this regard
 - Efforts to improve safety at bus stops
 - Location of bus stops
 - The design of bus stops and the materials used to produce them
- The relationship between bus drivers and young people:
 - The training bus drivers receive
 - The complaints procedures in operation on buses
 - Strategies which could be/are being employed to improve the behaviour of young people
 - Strategies which could be/are being employed to improve the image of young people in the population at large
 - Actions which could be taken to improve the relationship between bus drivers and young people
- The cleanliness and condition of buses, including graffiti:
 - Current initiatives in place to improve the condition of the fleet
- The extent to which young people's views and needs are routinely taken account of during transport decision making

February

Forum meeting with relevant decision makers to discuss the main issues that have emerged from the inquiry and possible recommendations

March

Draft and agree the final report.

April

The forum will present its draft final report and recommendations to the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) meeting to be held on 19th April 2006

Witnesses

The following witnesses have been identified as possible contributors to the Inquiry:

- Metro
- First Bus
- Arriva
- Education Leeds
- Members of the Youth Parliament
- Leeds City Council:
 - Development Department
 - Equality Unit
 - Community Safety
 - Children's Services